

Requirements

Naramore Bain Brady & Johanson, contractor for the HUD-financed project to define Alaska Native housing requirements, has recently completed its first three months on this project.

Reporting on the results of project activities to date, David Haworth, NBBJ project manager, said, "We have been able to accumulate, for the first time, all existing data on cultural, economic and physical factors affecting Native housing and the ability of existing programs to meet Native housing requirements. This activity has shown us that there are many weaknesses in this existing information, though."

Working with Native and other community representatives, NBBJ is currently planning a series of intensive surveys in Native communities throughout the state. The team plans to talk to nearly 800 Native households and visit housing examples in all 12 Native regions of the state during December and January.

By working with the 12 Native regional corporations, using

Native interviewers and holding informal meetings in the communities visited, they hope to expand the breadth of the survey and achieve a better understanding of Native housing needs than would otherwise be the case.

Based on the results of these surveys, recommendations will be made to HUD regarding the need to add, modify or supplement their existing housing programs for Alaska Natives. Specific areas of concern will include means for improving the ability of HUD programs to accommodate the wide range of conditions existing in Alaska and the unique characteristics of the Native environment.

Recommendations will cover all aspects of housing, including financing, design, construction and maintenance, as well as ways in which Natives can participate in the housing delivery process. The NBBJ team plans to communicate and review the results of these surveys with the Native community before these recommendations are made.